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RMR

FROM: BERLIN

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 343, AUGUST 27, 1961

ACTION DEPARTMENT 343, INFORMATION BONN 306, MOSCOW 225,
LONDON 230, PARIS 237.

FROM DOWLING

AS MENTIONED IN SEPARATE MESSAGE, I AM INCREASINGLY CONCERNED BY TRUCULENT ATTITUDE OF EAST GERMAN REGIME AS EVIDENCED BY PROPAGANDA AND ACTIONS. FOR EXAMPLE, PERMIT OFFICES WERE OPENED IN WEST BERLIN S-BAHN STATIONS IN DEFIANCE SENAT REJECTION AND KOMMANDATURA BAN. I AM PARTICULARLY DISTURBED, HOWEVER, AT RECURRING USE OF TEAR GAS, SHOTS IN AIR, ETC., BY VOPOS AGAINST WEST BERLINERS ALONG SECTOR BORDER, WHOSE ONLY OFFENSES HAVE BEEN TO GATHER IN 100-METER STRIP ON WEST BERLIN SIDE WHICH EAST GERMAN REGIME HAS DECLARED "PROHIBITED AREA", AND TO GATHER INSULTINGLY ON VOPO BEHAVIOR. THERE HAVE ALSO BEEN SEVERAL ATTEMPTS AT INTIMIDATION AGAINST ALLIED UNITS IN STRIP.

THERE IS REAL POTENTIAL DANGER IN THIS AREA; ONE DEATH OR SERIOUS INJURY MIGHT, I FEAR, BE QUITE ENOUGH TO INDUCE MOB ACTION BY WEST BERLINERS AGAINST EAST SECTOR BORDER GUARDS, AND WE MIGHT WELL FIND OURSELVES IN POSITION WHERE WE WOULD HAVE TO FACE DECISION WHETHER ALLIED PATROLS SHOULD JOIN VOPOS AGAINST WEST BERLINERS IN RE-ESTABLISHING ORDER. WEST BERLIN POLICE AND ALLIED TROOPS THUS FAR HAVE SHOWN ADMIRABLE SPIRIT AND SKILL IN MAINTAINING ORDER, BUT I DO NOT FEEL THEY SHOULD BE REQUIRED ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONTROL IN FACE OF CONTINUAL PROVOCATIONS OF VOPOS.

GENERAL WATSON AND MISSION EQUALLY CONCERNED THIS PROBLEM,

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-2- 343, AUGUST 27, 2 PM, FROM BERLIN

WHICH WILL BE DISCUSSED TOMORROW WITH OTHER COMMANDANTS
AND BRANDT. US PROPOSAL WILL BE THAT QUESTION OF VOPO
BEHAVIOR BE RAISED WITH SOVIET COMMANDANT TO INSIST ON
APPROPRIATE RESTRAINING ACTION AGAINST VOPOS.

LIGHTNER

RJT

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